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V.—POETRY IN THE LIMBURGER CHRONIK.

II.

The last group of songs preserved by Tilemann seems to have been the most important in the collector's own eyes. It is not only more extensive numerically, but it is evident that he noted these songs with particular care and pleasure, in several cases not withholding his own criticism: *ein gut lit*, he says (37, 10), *ein gut lit von wise unde von worten* (37, 21). There are about fifteen shorter songs or fragments of such, mostly recorded in the first part of the Chronicle with the events from 1350 to 1380, which seems to indicate that Tilemann himself had witnessed their popularity during his younger days. He has, therefore, either noted them as they arose, or, in case he wrote the Chronicle during the latter part of his life, has in recording them given pleasant reminiscences of his youth. Their prevailing theme is that inexhaustible theme of all popular poetry, love, with but two exceptions, which are didactic in character. The longing for the beloved one, the pain and sorrow of parting, and the promise of faithfulness resound here in such beautiful strains that we may well ask, "How is this possible in an age which marks the decline of German poetry, and which is stirred by movements like that of the Flagellants?" In vain shall we look for a connection with the last representatives of Minnepoetry, whose general character we have already described. Neither will a comparison of the Meistersinger poetry, with its artificial metres and its didactic and allegoric contents, give us a satisfactory answer.¹ There seems to be no doubt that we must look for another source for our songs than those which are historically warranted in German poetry of that time.

We should certainly commit an anachronism were we to treat our chronicler like a literary critic of the present century, equipped with all the methods of historiography. Considering, however, Tilemann's attitude toward poetical phenomena, which we attempted to characterize in our first essay, it is perhaps justifiable to conclude that he himself indicates the source of that kind of poetry

¹ Cf. J. Grimm, Ueber den altdeutschen Meistergesang.

of which he has given us a number of specimens. Certain documents, like the famous passage in Gottfried's *Tristan*, give evidence of the fact that literary criticism had developed to great perfection in many mediaeval circles. And we can fortunately conceive of a man of fine literary taste in those times without questioning him as to his system of philosophical aesthetics. We may, therefore, at least ask whether it is not strange that Tilemann does not mention one of the popular songs until he has given us the remarkable account of Reinhard von Westerburg and has characterized the poetry of the Flagellants? It would rather be peculiar if such songs had not been sung until the year 1350. But it is quite natural, and entirely within our chronicler's character and the limited, undeveloped means of prose expression, that he thus should have directed the attention of his readers to that kind of poetry which he himself esteemed so highly.

However, even if we do not consider Tilemann's *Chronicle* one of the first naive attempts at literary criticism or at a history of contemporary German poetry, his book is of great importance for the history of the German "*Volkslied*," which still remains to be written.¹ The most important effort in this direction, Ludwig Uhland's classical "*Abhandlung*" (*Schriften zur Geschichte und Sage*, III), presents the subject from a comparative point of view, and is less concerned with a critical investigation of the historical growth of German popular poetry. Hence Uhland has confined himself almost exclusively to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, only occasionally referring to the older forms of the *Volkslied* in German literature. And in the appendix to his collection (Vol. II 973), where he speaks of his "*Quellen*" and the linguistic treatment of his text, he simply enumerates and describes the former without making mention of our *Chronicle* and other important collections; whereas, Tilemann's specimens being the first historical documents of popular poetry after the decline of the "*Minnesang*," it seems natural that his account should become the starting point of an investigation into the development of the "*Volkslied*." And while a comparison with the earlier forms of the "*Minnesang*" and the later "*Volkslied*" will serve the final aim of this paper, it may perhaps also contribute to a future critical history of German popular poetry.

¹ F. H. Otto Weddigen's *Geschichte der deutschen Volkspoesie*, a mere compilation without original research, can of course not pass for such.

But before we proceed to such a comparison, a few remarks of a more general character may not be out of place. For although we believe ourselves to have proved that Tilemann himself cannot be the author of the songs recorded by him, it might still be claimed that our songs originated under the influence of the Minnesang. It is one of the principal arguments of Wilmanns that the want of documents of early popular love-poetry is to be explained "aus der Natur des menschlichen Herzens und allmählicher Entwicklung des geistigen Lebens." If through French influence it became gradually known and fashionable in Germany to give artistic expression to the deepest feeling of the human soul, is it not possible that the popular poetry of which our chronicle relates was at least indirectly due to the fact that the German people in general had learned from the Minnepoetry of the court circles and the "Spilleute" to sing their loves?

K. Burdach, in his essay (*Zeitschr. f. d. Alt.* XXVII 343 ff.) has, according to my opinion, proved conclusively that we owe this love poetry to the general character of Volkspoesie, which is that of a happy improvisation coming and passing away with the moment of its birth, if we do not possess specimens from the oldest times. He has shown further, by the example of the poetry of many nations, especially of savage tribes, that it is not at all against "die Natur des menschlichen Herzens" to express itself in lyrical strains, perhaps long before the rise of the epos; and the songs of our chronicle may probably add another argument to the evidence against the fallacious notion of a presumed older age of epic poetry. The defenders of this idea support their opinion mainly by the fact that the exterior world lends itself much sooner and much more easily to an objective artistic treatment by the poet than the world of emotions, and wherever the latter begins to find artistic expression it is supposed to commence with a symbolization of the exterior world, as it is still to be found in the "Natureingang" of the Minnesang and the later Volkslied. I believe this is a prejudice to which even Uhland is somewhat subject, although he says of the poetic form of certain parting songs: "Andre Abschiedslieder entschlagen sich gänzlich der Bilder und Naturanklänge. Das wahre Weh, die innigste Empfindung verschmähen allerdings oft jeden andern Ausdruck als den unmittelbarsten" (*Schriften*, III 446). But who would deny that "wahres Weh und *innigste Empfindung*," the special characteristic of all true Volkspoesie, should not have found its rhythmical expression

at least as early as the exterior world became an object of poetical imagination in epic poetry? It is a psychological fact that the soul, oppressed by violent passions and emotions, loses the freedom necessary for an imaginative artistic treatment of its various conditions. But would we call the rhythmical liberation of the soul, the primitive sounds of deepest emotion that seize us with elementary force, less poetic than the more artistic forms which betray the free play of imagination with the feelings? The almost entire absence of imaginative forms of expressions, of metaphors, Natureingang, etc., in the songs of our chronicle, which is not due to an element of bare reflection, seems to me a proof of their originality and age as well as of the age of the popular love song in general. Even the epic element, pointing to the peculiar circumstances or situation from which the single poem arose, is here wanting. Only in one case Tilemann mentions that the song was composed in praise of a beautiful woman in Strassburg, but, as if perfectly conscious of the individual and general character of popular poetry, he immediately and carefully adds that it was true of *all* good women (*unde trifftet auch alle gude wibe an*, 37, 12).

This simplicity in the expression of feeling, the absence of stylistic qualities peculiar to artistic poetry, may also be observed in most of the few specimens of German popular poetry before the rise of the Minnesong, with which we shall have to compare our songs. To these we count also the German strophes in the *Carmina Burana*, a collection of Latin "Vagantenpoesie" made in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, of both contemporary and of earlier material. Here we only consider those which very probably belong to the twelfth century, and which E. Martin, in his essay on the *Carmina Burana* (*Zeitschr. f. d. Altert.* 20, 46 ff.), declared imitations of the Latin poems to which they are appended. Since K. Burdach (*Reinmar und Walther*, 155 ff.) has refuted Martin's opinion as far as it is based upon metrical considerations, a further discussion of this question is not necessary. Martin, however, in order to support the theory, already advanced by Schmeller, that the German Minnesong had developed from the Latin "Vagantenpoesie," says: "in keiner dieser strophen—so getraue ich mich zu behaupten—ist ein wirklich individueller gedanke oder eine hindeutung auf bestimmte verhältnisse zu finden." According to my opinion of the character of the oldest popular love poetry, this seeming defect is rather a strong proof for their age and originality, which is still further strengthened by their

metrical qualities, of which we shall treat later. The same artless expression of the deep feeling of love may be found in the following strophe, Car. Bur. 99a:

Solde ih noh den tach geleben,
 daç ih wunschen solde
 nah der diu mir froude geben
 mach, ob si noh wolde.
 Min herçe muz nah ir streben ;
 möhtih si han. holde,
 so wolde ih in wunne sweben,
 swere ih nimmer dolde.

To this I could easily add more specimens of the same character, though varying in their themes, since the joy at the appearance of spring and in its gay dances certainly found also a very early expression in simple improvised strophes.

There is, however, one song among the poems of our chronicle which presupposes a definite situation, and which for this reason, probably, has been inserted in many collections of popular poetry, the "Nonnenlied," 48, 5:

Got gebe ime ein vurdreben jar,
 der mich machte zu einer nunnen
 und mir den swarzen mantel gap,
 den wiszen rock darunden.
 Sal ich geworden eine nunn
 sunder minen willen,
 so wel ich eime knaben jung
 sinen komer stillen.
 Und stillet he mir den minen nit,
 daran mach he vurlisen.

The contents of this song immediately remind us of the celebrated Capitulare of Charlemagne, of 789,¹ forbidding the nuns winileodes scribere vel mittere, and seem to prove that winileod may, in this connection, very well mean love-song, though its original meaning, according to Müllenhoff (*Z. f. d. A.* 9, 128 ff.; *MSD.* 362 ff.), was probably "Gesellenlied." That these "winileod" were certainly not of a very sacred nature can be seen from the additional clause: *et de pallore earum propter sanguinis minuationem*. Our song may, therefore, very well be considered a specimen of the poetry of nuns, even should it destroy the modern idea of a mediaeval nun, the creation of sickly romanticists.

¹ Cf. Wackernagel, *Litgesch.* I 48 Anm.; Uhland, *Schriften*, III 457.

Sappho's classic ἔγω δὲ μόνα κατεύδω was, however, frequently paraphrased in the nunneries of various centuries.¹

¹ Since the collections containing this popular poetry are not accessible to every reader in our country I shall quote some of the songs.

From the sixteenth century we have the following (Böhme, Altdeutsches Liederbuch, N. 242):

1. Ach gott wem sol ichs klagen
das herzeleiden mein !
Mein Herz will mir verzagen,
gefangen muss ich sein ;
Ins kloster bin ich gezogen
in meinen jungen jarn
darin ich muste leben
kein freud noch luste haben :
das klag ich allzeit gott !
2. Ach nun zu diser stunde
hört was ich sagen tu :
Verflucht seind all mein freunde
die mirs haben bracht darzu !
Dass ich mich sol erwerben
des nicht zu erwerben ist,
mein gut tun sie verzeren,
mein sel höchlich beschweren :
das klag ich von himel Christ, etc.

While the former poem reflects the influence of the Reformation to a certain degree, the following song, from the same century, is entirely composed in the spirit of "Got gebe im," etc. ; cf. Böhme, 243:

1. Ich sollt ein nönnlein werden,
ich hat kein lust darzu ;
Ich ess nicht gerne gerste,
wach auch nicht gerne fru.
Gott geb dem kläffer unglück vil,
der mich armes mägdelein
ins kloster bringen wil !
2. Im kloster, im kloster,
da mag ich nicht gesein ;
Da schneidt man mir mein härlein ab,
bringt mir gross schwere pein.
Gott geb dem kläffer unglück vil,
der mich armes mägdelein
ins kloster bringen wil !
3. Und wann es komt um mitternacht,
schlägt man die glocken an,
So hab ich armes mägdelein
noch nie kein schlaf getan.

The imperfect rhymes *jar : gap* of our song, which are a sign of its age, have induced me to change the first verse of the second strophe in order to establish the rhymes *nunn : jung*. All the MSS read here: *sal ich ein nunn geworden*; but it is evident that my proposed reading at least approximates the original text. The rhymes *nunnen : drunden*, *willen : stillen*, apparently feminine, are surely to be considered masculine, since none of the last syllables of these words are accented. The expression, *Got gebe ime ein vurdreben jar*, was evidently proverbial and popular; M. F. 9, 18: *got der gebe in leit!* Walther von der Vogelweide, 119, 17: *Got gebe ir eimer guten tac*.

Proceeding to the remaining songs of our chronicle, we find as one of their characteristic features, which they have in common with all true popular poetry, that they are addressed to girls, and not to married women as most poems of the Minnesingers are. This natural, healthy and ethical condition, gradually disclosed again in the course of his development by the classical representative of Minnepoetry, Walther von der Vogelweide, seems to be a matter of course in our poems. And we are surprised at the

-
- Gott geb dem kläffer unglück vil,
 der mich armes mägdelein
 ins kloster bringen wil!
4. Und wann ich vor die äbtissin kom,
 so sicht sie mich sauer an;
 Vil lieber wolt ich freien
 ein hübschen jungen man,
 Und der mein steter bule mag sein,
 so wär ich armes mägdelein
 des fastens und betens frei.
5. Ade, ade, feins klosterlein,
 ade, gehab dich wol!
 Ich weiss ein herzallerliebsten mein,
 der mich erfreuen sol;
 Auf in setz ich mein zuversicht,
 ein nönnelein werd ich nimmer nicht,
 ade, feins klösterlein!

This song was selected as a specimen of the present time; cf. Erk, Liederhort, No. 148:

1. O Klosterleben, du Einsamkeit,
 du stilles und ruhiges Leben!
 dir hab ich mich gänzlich ergeben,
 zu führen ein geistliches Leben:
 O Himmel, was hab ich gethan!
 die Liebe war Schuld daran.

sublime simplicity of womanhood which appears in the background, as it were, of these songs. There is no description of the physical beauty of woman, in which the Minnesingers abound; only once the "zarte rote mondeline" is modestly mentioned. All the qualities attributed to her are of a higher ethical character, as *rein*, *gut*, *minneclich*, *zart*, *züchtig*, thus showing the same purity and tenderness of feeling which appears in the earliest German poems addressed to the Virgin Mary. She is the "*liveste frauwe min*," the source of pure "*freude*." There are two strophes which show this very evidently. 65, 2:

Gepuret reine und suberlich
weisz ich ein wip gar minneclich,
di ist mit zochten wol bewart;
ich wolde daz si ez woste, di reine zart.

37, 13:

Eins reinen guden wibes angesichte
und frauweliche zucht darbi
di sint werlich gut zu sehen.
Zu guden wiben han ich plichte,
wan si sin alles wandels fri.

It is true there are, especially in the earliest Minnesingers, similar expressions of tender feeling, but their poetry was limited

2. Des Morgens wenn ich zur Kirche geh,
muss singen und beten alleine;
und wenn ich das Gloria patri sing,
so liegt mir mein Schätzlein wol immer im Sinn:
O Himmel, was hab ich gethan!
die Liebe war Schuld daran.
3. Dort kommt mein Vater und Mutter her,
sie beten für sich alleine;
sie haben gar schöne Kleider an,
ich aber muss in der Kutten stahn:
O Himmel, was hab ich gethan!
die Liebe war Schuld daran.
4. Des Mittags wenn ich zum Essen geh,
find ich es mein Tischchen alleine;
dann ess ich mein Brot und trinke mein Wein:
ach, könnt ich bei meinem schön Schätzchen sein!
O Himmel, was hab ich gethan!
die Liebe war Schuld daran.
5. Des Abends wenn ich nun schlafen geh,
find ich es mein Bettchen alleine;
dann lieg ich und kann nicht erwarmen:
ach, hätt ich mein Schätzchen in Armen!
O Himmel, was hab ich gethan!
die Liebe war Schuld daran.

to the exclusive circles of the nobility. We cannot prove that their ideas penetrated among the common people, and it is, therefore, almost entirely out of the question that they should have influenced popular poetry. It seems, on the other hand, much more probable that they themselves drew from the same source which flows so refreshingly in the songs of our chronicle. For the first time the ethical spirit of the people, destined to become such a powerful element in the literary regeneration of the eighteenth century, manifests itself independently in these deeply felt songs, and we can follow in the later development of the Volkslied the growth of the human ideal disclosed therein. One of the most important documents for the study of its history can be found in the *Liederbuch* der Clara Hätzlerin (ed. C. Haltaus, 1840), a collection of various kinds of poetry made by a nun of Augsburg in the fifteenth century. Among the 134 lyrical pieces of the first part, which consist of a number of Tagelieder, Meisterlieder, and poems of known poets of that period, we discover several songs of an entirely popular character. Their language and tone resemble so much that of the songs of Tilemann's Chronicle that his assertion of the popularity of his songs cannot possibly be doubted. The monostrophic improvisation of the Limburger songs has developed already into the poem of several strophes in the *Liederbuch* of the fifteenth century, and the purity and depth of their feeling mark a striking contrast to the lascivious tone of the Tagelieder which immediately precede them. They also are addressed to girls, who are called *schön, frumm, wandelsfrey* (No. 31, 1), *die rain, die säuberlich* (pretty) (38, 8), *zart lieb* (48, 2), etc. They are *der höchste schatz* und *größte fräd* (65, 1), their heart is *genaden vol*, etc. It is unnecessary to add that woman is described with the same colors in the classical popular songs of the sixteenth century.

This pure and high conception of womanhood could certainly not be without influence upon the relation of man to woman, and it is here that the ethical spirit of true popular poetry reveals itself in a sublime manner. The final aim for which all the "service" of the Minnesinger was intended is never mentioned in these songs. Instead of the desire for possession, or of sensual enjoyment, it is the idea of eternal fidelity which rules the feelings of all these songs, and it is perhaps significant that the theme of infidelity is scarcely treated in the earliest folksongs. In the following songs this plea for fidelity appears as simply and tenderly expressed as anywhere in the realms of poetry. 37, 23 :

Ach reinez wip von guder art,
 gedenke an alle stedicheit,
 daz man auch ni von dir gesait,
 daz reinen wiben obel steit.
 Daran saltu gedenken
 und salt nit von mir wenken,
 di wile daz ich daz leben han.

Noch ist mir einer klage not
 von der livesten frauwen min,
 daz ir zartez mondelin, rot
 wel mir ungenedig sin.
 Si wil mich zu grunt vurderben,
 untrost wel si an mich erben,
 dazu enweisz ich keinen rat.

53, 17 :

Ich wel in hoffen leben vort,
 ob mir it heiles moge geschehen
 von der livesten frauwen min.
 Spreche si zu mir ein fruntlich wort,
 so solde truren von mir flihen.

Respons. { Ich wel in hoffen leben vort,
 ob mir it heiles moge geschehen
 von der livesten frauwen min.
 Ir gunste i mit heile bekorte.
 Ach Got, daz ich si solde sehen.

Respons. { Ich wel in hoffen leben vort
 ob mir it heiles moge geschehen
 von der livesten frauwen min.

65, 20:

Wie mochte mir umber basz gesin
 in ruwen?
 Ez grunet mir in dem herzen min
 als uf der auwen.
 Daran gedenke
 Min lip, und nit enwenke.

Of all the songs recorded by Tilemann, 37, 23 will probably remind us most of the style of the Minnesongs, especially since it is mentioned as early as 1350. A closer examination of its language, however, will show its relation to earlier and later folksongs: *von guder art*; cf. Goedeke, *Liederbuch aus dem 16 Jahrhundert*, No. 14, 1: *von edler art*; 72, 16: *von edler art. stedicheit* is the technical term for fidelity in the Minnesongs as well as in the earlier folksongs; cf. MF. 16, 1; Walther v. d. Vogelw. 43, 29: *wir man wir wellen daz diu staetekeit in guoten wiben gar ein krône si*; *Liederbuch der Hätzlerin*, 36, 17; 72, 31; 117, 10. In one of the fragments of our chronicle which probably notes only

the beginnings of three strophes, the word *truwe* is used; cf. 56, 18, *ich wil dir i mit ganzen truwen leben*. The *mondelin rot* occurs in one of the oldest strophes of the Car. Bur. as *roser-varwer mund* (136a). *wenken* is very often used in the Liederb. d. H. *di wile daz ich daz leben han*; cf. M. F. 9, 25: *die wile unz ich daz leben hân*.

53, 17 is of great interest in regard to strophic construction, *in hoffen leben*; cf. L. d. Hätzl. 102, 31, *in hoffen ich leb*; and our chronicle 49, 11, *hoffen heldet mir das leben*.

65, 20 must certainly be called the gem of Tilemann's collection. "*Wi mochte mir umber basz gesîn*" is a proverbial expression; cf. Parcival, 222, 30, *wie möhte der imer baz gesîn*. L. d. H. Sprüche, No. 49, *Ich bin ir sy mein, wie möcht uns baiden bas gesein*. *Ez grunet mir in dem herzen min* occurs in the mystics; cf. Pfeifer, Deutsche Mystiker, I 4, *dar leben unses herren dar grunete und wuchs in der lûte herze*; cf. MSH. 112b, *so grunet mîn herze, als iuwer klê*.

The idea of fidelity expresses itself most beautifully also in the two little parting songs of Tilemann's collection. The pain of parting was very effectively introduced into the Tagelieder by the Minnesingers in order to form a strong contrast to the feeling of happiest enjoyment to which the lovers had previously given themselves up (cf. Walter De Gruyter, Das deutsche Tagelied, 37 ff.) The situation as well as the tone of expressing the sorrow of parting is entirely different in our songs, and perfectly in accordance with their ethical character. 45, 5:

Ach Got, daz ich si miden musz,
di ich zu den freuden hatte irkoren,
daz dut mir werlich alzu we.
Mochte mir noch werden ein fruntlich grusz,
des ich so lange han enboren.

51, 22:

Miden scheiden,
daz dut werlich we
uzer maszen we.
Und enist daz nit unmoeglichen,
von einer di ich gerne anse.

My reasons for arranging the last song in this manner will be given later. I believe it is a whole strophe and does not contain the beginnings of several strophes, as Lorenz and Wyss seem to think. Several expressions in both songs recur almost verbally in numerous parting songs not only of the sixteenth century, but also in the Minnesingers and in popular poetry of the present time (cf.

Wilmanns, *Leben Walthers*, 399). The intimate relation of these songs of the *Limburger Chronik* to those of the *Liederbuch der Hätzlerin* appears most manifestly in the following poems quoted from the latter. 50:

Gesegen dich got, liebs fräwlin zart!
 Ich schaid von dir vnd lasz dich hie,
 Vergisz mein nit, et leyt mir hart,
 Wann ich dir was mit triuen ye
 Vnd will dir wencken nymmermer.

Gesegen dich got, mein hertz ist dein,
 Du bist mein trost, mein vsserwelt!
 Die weil ich leb, so will ich sein
 Mit stättigkeit zu dir geselt!
 So volgt nur fräd, wā ich hin cher.

Seid hoffen ist für trauren gût,
 So hoff ich wāger werd mein sach.
 Ye lieber chind, ye scherpffer rût,
 Halt vest, als mir dem gnad versprach,
 So hab ich fräd on wider ker.

Gesegen dich got, ist nit mein fûg,
 Es pringt mir leid vnd senende clag.
 Meiner tusend trügen laids genuog
 An dem, das ich allaine trag;
 Doch nert mich hoffen wider her.

77:

Ach schaiden, du vil senende not,
 Das mir dein gwalt ye gepott,
 Du machst mich plaich, rott,
 Bis in den tot,
 Das mir nit wûrser mag gesein.

Das hertz ist allzeit traurens vol,
 Wann sich lieb von lieb schaiden sol;
 Es tût nit wol!
 Darumb ich dol
 Gar senlich in dem hertzen mein.

Mit manigem seüftzen ynneclich
 Stānd zwār mein gedenck hinder sich,
 Wie wol ich
 Gen nyemantz sprich,
 Dest geringer ist das hertz nicht.

86:

Meiden hat mich ser verwunt
 Gar tieff in meines hertzen grunt;
 Das macht ir lieb, von der mir kunt
 Ist worden gantze stättikait.

Nun hilf gelück zu stätter triw,
 Wann meiden pringt gross affterrew,
 Gen ainer da mein lieb ist new
 Tag vnd nacht on vnderschaid.

Sy liebt mir ye für all dis welt,
 Ich hoff, ich vind des widergelt,
 Das vnser lieb bleib vnvermelt;
 In praun vnd grön ist sy geclaidt.

A decisive proof for the age of our songs, and consequently also indirectly for the age of German Volkspoesie in general, may, according to my opinion, be gathered from their metrical construction. And we shall find that in the structure of the verses as well as of the strophes they follow old Germanic metrical laws.

For centuries German prosody was suffering under the ascendancy of rules abstracted from the ancients, and even classic poets of the last century were mainly guided by their metrical instinct and feeling. The liberation of those ancient fetters we owe to the excellent researches of R. Westphal, who for the first time showed conclusively that the principle of accent and rhythm, and not that of quantity, is the fundamental metrical law of German poetry (*Theorie der Neuhochdeutschen Metrik*, 2 Aufl., 1877). In his essay, *Zur vergleichenden Metrik der indogermanischen Völker* (Kuhn's *Zeitschr.* IX 437), he had made the revolutionizing discovery of the common basis of all Indogermanic prosody consisting of 2×8 syllables divided by a caesura after the eighth syllable. In the second edition of *Die Metrik der Griechen* von A. Rossbach und R. Westphal, 1868, he attempted to show that the same principle of metrical construction was to be found in the anuṣṭubh of the Veda and the śloka of classical Sanskrit, as well as in the versus saturnius and the old German "Langzeile." His opinion was supported in regard to the prosody of the Avesta by K. Geldner, in his treatise, *Ueber die Metrik der jüngeren Avesta*, Tübingen, 1877. Starting from the results obtained by these two scholars, Professor F. Allen (Kuhn's *Zeitschr.* XXIV 556 ff.) found that the metrical unity of the Indogermanic verse was the tetrapodic hemistich, out of which the Indian and old Germanic versus longus and also the Greek hexameter had gradually developed. Independently of Allen, H. Usener, in his excellent book, *Altgriechischer Versbau, ein Versuch vergleichender Metrik*, Bonn, 1887, which also abounds in valuable suggestions for German

metrics, has reached the same results.¹ In order to support his theory of the development of the hexameter from the tetrapodic Indogermanic "Urvers," Usener justly points to the fact: von hause aus gibt es nur éinen deutschen vers von vier hebungen. Er wird nicht gemessen nach silbenzahl, nicht nach quantität, sondern nach jenen vier hebungen, die vom sprachlichen hochton getragen sind. Das ist die form aller unserer erzählenden poesie gewesen, so weit wir sie zurück verfolgen können und ebenso der *volksmässigen* lyrik bis auf den heutigen tag. In the course of his discussion he calls attention to the principal peculiarities of the prosody of German popular poetry which are mostly due to the influence of rhythm, as already observed by E. Stolte in his *Metrische Studien über das deutsche Volkslied*, 1883, and recently treated by E. Sievers in his essay, *Die Entstehung des deutschen Reimverses* (Paul & Braune's *Beiträge*, XIII 121 ff.)²

While we find in the development of the artistic Minnepoetry a gradual observance of the regular change of arsis (Hebung) and thesis (Senkung), the entire omission as well as the accumulation of a number of theses between two arses will be frequently noticed in popular poetry. It is wrong to see in the omission of the thesis the effect of a conscious artistic reflection on the part of the poet, as it has been done by Bartsch,³ who discovered it in the Nibelungenlied, and by R. Becker,⁴ who believes to be able to prove it in the earliest Austrian Minnesongs. The absence of the thesis is to be explained not only "aus der freude an kraftvoller betonung" (Usener), but also by the dipodic structure of the German verse, and the consequent distinction of a "haupt- und nebenton."

A mere glance at the songs of our chronicle will convince us that we have here before us the old Germanic verse of four accents with a frequent syncope of the thesis. I have noticed the following cases: 37, 31 von der livestén frauwen mín; 37, 32 daz ir zártez móndelín rôt; 37, 33 wel mir úngenédig sín; 48, 10 sunder mínén willen; 48, 12 sinen kómér stillen; 53, 19 von der livestén frauwen mín; 65, 21 in rúwén; 65, 23 als uf der auwén. A similar syncope of the thesis may be observed in the following German strophes of the *Carm. Bur.*: 99a, 5; 100a, 5; 127a, 4; 129a;

¹ Cf. R. Westphal, *Gött. gel. Anz.*, No. 20, 1887.

² Unfortunately, I did not receive Professor Wilmanns' exceedingly profound treatise, *Der altdeutsche Reimvers*, until this essay was printed.

³ Cf. Bartsch, *Untersuch. über das Nibelungenlied*, 142 ff.

⁴ R. Becker, *Der altheimische Minnesang*, 50 ff.

141a, 3; for it is absurd, according to my opinion, if Martin adopts in these cases "sprachlich unrichtige Betonung" in order to save his theory (cf. Burdach, Reinmar und Walther, 156). By the aid of these observations concerning accentuation, I believe to be able to reconstruct one of our songs hitherto considered as a fragment, and as a proof for the fact that Tilemann noted the melody rather than the text of the songs as he did in the case of the Flagellant poetry (cf. Lorenz, Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen³ I 144). I propose to read 51, 22 in the following manner:

Mídén, scheídn
 dáz dut wérlich wé
 úszer mászen wé.
 und eníst daz nít unmoéglichén,
 von einer, dí ich gérn ansé.

A similar difference between the songs of our chronicle and the artistic Minnepoetry is to be found in regard to the use of the anakrusis. The strict rules of prosody of the Minnepoetry allow only monosyllabic anakrusis, and there are only a few exceptions to this rule even in the beginnings of the artistic poetry (cf. Haupt, M. F. 292). The popular poetry, however, has always treated this rule with disrespect. While the exceptions in M. F. show only dissyllabic anakrusis, most of the cases occurring in Spervogel and other poems of a popular nature, an anakrusis of two, three and more syllables is not unusual in our songs: 37, 31 von der lîvestén; 37, 32 daz ír zártez; 65, 23 als uf der áuwén; 37, 13 eins reinen gúden. The same treatment of the anakrusis prevails in Car. Bur. 112; 106a, 7; 108a, 4.

A further proof for the popularity and age of the songs of our chronicle can be obtained from an observation of the nature of the rhymes. Although the distinction between masculine and feminine rhymes appears quite plainly in our songs, the masculine rhyme is preferred in most cases, a peculiarity also of the Car. Bur.: 106a, 107a, 115a, 129a, 133a, 134a. Imperfect rhyme, quite rarely occurring in artistic poetry after 1190, may be observed in the following cases: 37, 4 *laszen* (lân) *enkan*; 37, 23 *art*: *sait*; 48, 6 *nunnen*: *darunden* (darunnen?); 48, 9 *nunn*: *jung*; 53, 18 *geschehen*: *fliehen*. The fact that even the unaccented *e* can bear the rhyme, as e. g. in 65, 21, is entirely in harmony with the rhythmical laws of German popular poetry, which frequently allow a strong accent on weak syllables.

Still more important proof for the age of our songs may be obtained by observations from the structure of the strophes. It is certainly true that Tilemann's attention was principally directed to the "wise," i. e. the musical melody of the songs he recorded. The following remark will, however, show that the words and their strophic structure did not escape his notice. He says in the year 1360: "Item in disem selben jare vurwandelten sich dictamina unde gedichte in Duschen lidern. Want man bit her lider lange gesongen hat mit funf oder ses gesetzen, da machent di meister nu lider die heissent widersenge, mit dren gesetzen. Auch hat ez sich also vurwandelt mit den pifen unde pifenspel unde hat ufgestegen in der museken, unde ni also gut waren bit her, als nu in ist anegangen. Dan wer vur funf oder ses jaren ein gut pifer was geheissen in dam ganzen lande, der endauc itzunt nit eine flige." Is it not strange that Tilemann, who noticed this change so carefully, should not have preserved us at least one of those songs of five or six strophes which in that year became unfashionable? With but three exceptions the recorded songs consist of one strophe only, and a comparison of one of those exceptions (53, 17), called by him a "lit unde widergesenge," with the Meisterlieder accessible to me¹ disclosed no relation whatever. The simple answer to our question will therefore be that it is the old monostrophic form of the popular German song which we have here before us, a form which is given by the improvisatory nature of this kind of poetry.² The same form is found in the Car. Bur. and the oldest specimens of the Minnesong, so that it is quite safe to say that all the old German love poetry of which we have no documents consisted of monostrophic poems. The entire absence of songs of five and six strophes can be taken as another proof that Tilemann consciously distinguished between Meisterlieder and that poetry which he recorded.

It is a well known fact that the old Germanic "Urvers" of four accents, twice or four times repeated, constituted the old Germanic "Urstrophe" as it appears e. g. in Otfrid. Among the songs of our chronicle we meet this strophe twice, 65, 2, and in the "Nonnenlied," 48, 5. There are, however, several songs composed in a strophe which differs very much from this old and simple form. Comparing it with other known strophes we might be inclined to

¹ K. Bartsch, *Meisterlieder der Kolmarer Handschrift*; Goedeke-Tittmann, *Liederbuch*.

² Cf. Scherer, *Deutsche Studien*, I 333; Burdach, *ibid.* 165.

declare it a variety of the old popular Moroltstrophe, but a more careful inspection will show this to be impossible. According to Scherer's investigations, based upon the theories of Müllenhoff (*Zeitschrift für d. Altertum*, XVII 569 ff., and *Deutsche Studien*, I 283 ff.), the Moroltstrophe developed from the old custom of lengthening the last of the four verses constituting the old German strophe. The first half of this "Langvers," separated from the latter part by a caesura, was inserted as a new verse in the strophe, and, since it does not rhyme with any of the other verses, is called "Waise." As a further peculiarity of strophes containing a "Waise," Scherer pointed out that a monosyllabic (stumpfe) Waise will always appear between feminine rhymes and a dissyllabic (klingende) Waise between masculine rhymes. Since a Waise may be placed before any one of the four verses of the original strophe, we get strophes of five, six, seven and eight verses. In my opinion Müllenhoff-Scherer's theory of the development of the "Waise" is somewhat mechanical, and, for various reasons, principally musical ones, I believe that the Waise is a separate verse introduced into the strophe of four verses after an old German custom.¹ Yet, whether we accept Scherer's theory or not, we will not be able to explain the strophe of the Limburger songs by the Moroltstrophe. The usual form of the latter is :

4 — masc. a
 4 — masc. a
 4 — masc. b
 4 ∪ fem. c (Waise)
 4 — masc. b

of which there are several varieties, all agreeing, however, in having the Waise immediately before the last verse. The form of the strophe of three songs in our chronicle, on the contrary, is :

4 ∪ fem. a	or, 4 — masc. a
4 — masc. b	4 ∪ fem. b
3 ∪ fem. c (Waise)	4 — masc. c (Waise)
4 ∪ fem. a	4 — masc. a
4 — masc. b	4 ∪ fem. b.

It can easily be seen that this strophe has none of the peculiarities of the Moroltstrophe: the position of the Waise before the last verse and the distinction of masculine rhyme and dissyllabic

¹ Cf. R. Becker, *ibid.* 42 ; but also R. M. Meyer, *Grundlagen des Mittelhochdeutschen Strophenbaus*.

Waise. We find, however, in all the songs composed after this form a strong pause after the third verse, the close of the first sentence even typographically indicated by a period. Among all the strophes of the old popular poetry I found a similar form only in the very old strophe of the Car. Bur. :

nah mine gesellen ist mir we.
 Gruonet der walt allenthalben :
 wa ist min geselle 'alselange' ?
 Der ist geriten hinnen,
 owi, wer sol mich minnen ?

Richard M. Meyer, in his exceedingly interesting and suggestive treatise quoted above (*Grundlagen des Mhd. Strophenbaus*, 79), has pointed to the fact that in two old songs preserved under the name of Dietmar von Eist, 37, 4 ; 37, 18, a similar pause may be noticed. He further compares M. F. 3, 7 ; 3, 12, and several of Neidhard's popular songs, and finds in the form a, a, b | , a reminiscence of the Ljópaháttir of the Edda, as he sees in the old Otfridstrophe a reminiscence of the Kvípuháttir. I believe that the first three verses of our songs in question have preserved the same reminiscence of the Ljópaháttir. And although the position of the rhymes in our songs is more artistic than that in the Otfridstrophe (a, a, b, b), I think that their more artistic arrangement is a device to bridge over the pause after the third verse. Should the Moroltstrophe, as Meyer supposes, also have arisen from the Ljópaháttir, then the form of our strophe would still be a highly interesting and peculiar document for the transition of alliterative into rhymed poetry.

An excellent illustration of this process may probably be found in the strophic structure of 53, 17. The repetition of the first three verses in the responsorium will at least show that the form a, a, b was still felt as a strophic whole, while the alliterations: *hoffen*, *heiles*, *frawwen*, *fruntlich*, *flihen*, etc., are additional reminiscences of its antiquity. In the later development of German popular lyrics this form is dropped almost entirely ; only once have I found it, in the Ambraser Liederbuch, No. 81. The question, however, has frequently occurred to me whether the tripartite form of the various strophic structures of the Minnesingers has not developed more organically from the Limburger strophe than from the Moroltstrophe.

Summing up the results of these investigations, I believe we are justified in drawing the following conclusions :

The singular position of the Limburger Chronik in the literature of the fourteenth century, and its great value for the history of German literature in general, are principally due to its author's interest for the poetical phenomena of his time. While he faithfully recorded important facts concerning the Minnesong and religious poetry, his greatest merit consists in the preservation of contemporary specimens of popular songs which cannot be classed with any of the existing forms of artistic poetry. We must therefore consider them as documents of a popular poetry which developed by the side of the poetry historically known to us. A careful comparison of its contents and form with that of earlier and later popular poetry makes it highly probable that German folksongs have existed since the oldest times, although we do not possess documents for all the various periods of its history. The language and the metrical structure of the Limburger songs furnish especially strong proofs of the antiquity of popular German love-poetry. The songs of the Limburger Chronik are therefore very important documents for throwing light upon the character and development of the earlier as well as of the later German Volkslied.¹

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¹ It is gratifying to me to find that Edward Schröder, the able editor of Scherer's *Literaturgeschichte*, in an essay on *Die erste Kürenbergerstrophe* (*Zeitschr. f. d. Alt.* XXXII, 1 Heft, 137 ff.) has reached the same results regarding the importance of the Limburger songs for the study of the older German lyrics. The strophe which Schröder compares with the first Kürenbergersong in order to reconstruct the text of the latter was excluded from my discussion on account of its didactic nature. Its metrical form is, however, a variety of the same which we find in 37, 13; 45, 5; 53, 17, and which I have attempted to explain, p. 464 ff.